



Pacific Southwest Lutheran Women Missionary League Convention

Saturday, June 12, 2010

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Good morning!

Oh, it is so good to be with a group of women – LUTHERAN women!

It doesn't get any better than this.

Unless, of course, you are all REPUBLICANS.

But, I am not going to be THAT picky.

Whatever your politics – and I am going to set politics aside this morning -- we share a common faith – a faith that sustains us, strengthens us, and guides us on our journey together.

One of my favorite Bible passages is about the two travelers on the road to Emmaus.

You know the story as well as I do.

The travelers were approached by a stranger – probably with dusty sandals, and common clothes.

They did not recognize him – even when he asked what they had been talking about before he arrived.

They were surprised he did not know about the recent events in Jerusalem, but they told him about Jesus of Nazareth – the prophet, powerful in word and deed -- who had been sentenced to death, and then crucified.

The travelers said it was the third day since all that had taken place, and they had hoped He was the one who was going to redeem Israel.

But, the stranger told the travelers that they were too slow to believe what the prophets had spoken. He explained that Christ had to SUFFER before entering his glory -- and he went on to explain what was said in all the Scriptures.

When they approached a village, the travelers invited the stranger to join them for dinner. It was not until he was at the table -- when he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them -- did they recognize ... Jesus.

And, then ... he vanished.

I like this story because we'd all like to think we would recognize the stranger walking beside us, the man with dusty sandals and common clothes.

But, how many times have we missed Him?

How many times, have we walked on by the stranger?

In the book, "*Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*," there is a story of how, after World War II, a group of German students -- young people — volunteered to help rebuild a cathedral in England that had been a casualty of the German bombings.

As the work progressed, debate broke out on how best to restore a large statue of Jesus -- with his arms outstretched.

Careful patching repaired all of the damage to the statue -- except for Christ's hands, which had been totally destroyed by bomb fragments.

Should they attempt the delicate task of reshaping those hands?

Finally, the young workers reached a decision -- that still stands today.

The statue of Jesus ... has no hands.

A simple inscription nearby reads: "Christ Has No Hands ... BUT OURS."

Isn't that really our commitment and calling to each other? To be His hands here on earth?

I think it is.

Budget cuts within state government have resulted in reduced or limited funding for services for our most vulnerable -- the elderly, disabled and low-income residents.

That's why, by Executive Order, I established "Arizona Serves."

With the assistance from a variety of state agencies, Arizona Serves is connecting faith-based and non-profit organizations to help meet those needs.

Our efforts are strengthening the existing network of community agencies and faith based organizations toward a shared goal of helping the community during difficult economic times.

The "Arizona Serves" website, gives Arizonans an opportunity to communicate with each other about what is going on across our communities in specific areas of need, including:

- Foster Care participation
- Free or reduced-cost child care
- Supervised CPS visits
- Elder independence, and grandparents raising grandchildren
- And Transportation for the underserved.

Federal, State, and local governments, national service organizations, corporations, churches, synagogues, and voluntary groups, must continue to work together.

That's how we can continue to provide food, shelter, and comfort for the needy.

That's how we can serve the stranger beside us.

Arizonans are continuing their partnership and resolve to invigorate their commitment to reach out to their fellow Arizonans in need.

We are all part of that caring – we are all committed to keeping the spiritual message that God has placed in our hearts.

-- May that message strengthen and preserve you throughout this convention ...

... And may we ALL recognize that special Stranger ... as we journey on our own roads to Emmaus.

Thank you.